

Bright Remembers Victims in the March 10, 2009 Shootings in Geneva and Coffee Counties

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congressman Bobby Bright delivered a speech on the floor of the House of Representatives to remember the victims of the tragic shootings that occurred in Geneva and Coffee Counties on March 10, 2009. Congressman Bright had planned to deliver the speech yesterday, but was forced to reschedule due to last night's voting schedule. You can view a copy of the video [here](#), and a copy of his floor speech is below.

Congressman Bright's remarks, as prepared:

Mr. Speaker, one year ago yesterday a terrible tragedy occurred in South Alabama. On March 10, 2009, a lone gunman went on a murderous rampage through Coffee and Geneva Counties, leaving 10 people dead and several wounded in Kinston, Samson, and Geneva Alabama. It was truly one of the worst acts of violence our part of the country has ever seen.

We can never fully understand what would drive someone to commit such a monstrous act, especially against his own family and a helpless child. Be it personal, economic, or mental problems that lead to such cruelty, it is unimaginable that something like this could happen until it strikes your friends and neighbors.

Even though the tragedy was a devastating shock to our small and close-knit community, it also showed the resolve of those who help protect and defend our way of life. We all owe a debt of gratitude to the first responders: State Troopers of the Dothan Troopers Post, officers of the Geneva Police Department, officers of the Geneva County Sheriff's Department, and an officer of the Alabama Conservation and Natural Resources department, who pursued and eventually found the gunman dead from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Without their swift action and response, the loss of life could have been even worse. A year's time of reflection has only made their brave efforts more worthy of our respect and praise.

Another group that must be recognized is the soldiers of nearby Fort Rucker. Since World War II, Fort Rucker has been an invaluable part of the Wiregrass. They were quick to answer the call of local officials, still reeling from the shock, to serve their communities and keep the peace. We are proud of Fort Rucker's presence in the Second District, and are very appreciative of everything they do.

I would also like to thank my colleagues in the House, especially the 58 co-sponsors of a resolution expressing sympathy to the victims of that terrible day, for showing their steadfast support. Though nothing could replace those who were lost, I know the folks in Geneva and Coffee Counties certainly appreciated that Congress was thinking of them during their time of mourning.

I encourage those watching across the country to remember the wounded as we pray for their continued recovery: State Trooper Mike Gillis, Greg McCullough, Ella Meyers, and Jeffrey Nelson.

And to join me in praying for the departed victims and their families: Bruce Maloy, Lisa McLendon, Andrea Myers, Corrine Gracy Myers, Sonya Smith, James Starling, James White, Virginia White, Dean Wise, and Tracy Wise.

Even though those 10 souls are no longer with us, I know we will never forget them and will do all that we can to honor their memories. As elected officials, we never want to come to the House floor for these purposes. In many ways, however, it is one of the most important duties we have members of Congress; to honor and call the attention of the nation to those in our districts who have experienced great loss and committed brave acts in the most difficult times. I hope for all of us that these appearances are few and far between.

May our thoughts and prayers be with the citizens of Geneva and Coffee Counties as they remember the tragic event that happened in their communities one year ago today.

Thank you Mr. Speaker, and I yield back the balance of my time.